GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4800
ANSWERED ON:27.04.2005
SAARC HIGH ECONOMIC COUNCIL
Seth Shri Lakshman Chandra

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has suggested setting up of SAARC High Economic Council with the Finance and Commerce Ministers of member countries;

(b) if so, the details in this regard; and

(c) the response of the member countries in this regard ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS(SHRI E. AHAMED)

(a) & (b) At the 25th Session of the Council of Ministers of SAARC held on July 20-21, 2004, at Islamabad, the External Affairs Minister made a proposal for the setting up of a SAARC High Economic Council to promote ideas and initiatives related to regional economic integration. The Council of Ministers decided to refer this proposal to the existing SAARC mechanisms of Meetings of Finance and Commerce Ministers as well as SAARCFINANCE for consideration.

(c) The 4th SAARC Commerce Ministers Meeting, held in Islamabad on November 22-23, 2004 conveyed approval for Member States to send their comments on the proposal to the SAARC Secretariat for consideration during the subsequent Thirteenth Meeting of the Committee on Economic Cooperation to be held in Bangladesh. In view of the importance of a SAARC High Economic Council in deliberating policy issues, we sought to include this issue for discussion at the 13th SAARC Summit, which has been postponed. Individual countries have not conveyed any specific response to the proposal.